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25 August 1982

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Finance

FROM: STAT

Acting Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

SUBJECT: State Certifying and Disbursing Services for
Foreign Broadcast Information Service

1. State Airgram A-1759 implemented Certifying and Disbursing Services for FBIS effective 1 October 1980. With few exceptions, the system is functioning well. There is, however, a problem area which should be addressed at this time. Paragraph 5 requests your assistance.

2. State Department certifying officers at some of our bureau locations are reluctant to certify vouchers or allow payment for FBIS activities which are not consistent with State regulations or Embassy policies--employee awards, promotions, travel entitlements, etc. This topic has been of great concern to all Embassy certifying officers and was discussed with them by the Chief, FBIS/B&F during bureau visits.

3. Airgram A-1759 states that certifying officers at the posts may certify all general payments, but with the proviso that payment vouchers must be signed by an FBIS officer who is authorized to approve bureau expenses. Some certifying officers, however, adhere strictly to their State regulations and/or Embassy policies. Their position is endorsed in the attached 2 June letter to Chief, FBIS/B&F from the Director of the Department of State Office of Personnel Systems. Officers at the embassies state that if they are not allowed to exercise their certifying authorities properly and are required merely to "rubber stamp" FBIS vouchers, then FBIS should appoint its own certifying officers.

4. One of the reasons Certifying and Disbursing Services were implemented with State Department is that the Audit Report of FBIS for the period 1 November 1977 - 31 August 1979 stated that some bureau certifying officers did not have a clear conception or understanding of the full responsibilities and authorities of a certifying officer and were not particularly qualified nor sufficiently trained to be proficient certifying officers. We are now caught between limitations of State Department regulations and inexperienced FBIS staff in the field acting as certifying officers.

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5. Your views on how to seek resolution of the problem is requested. It would appear that negotiations with State at a higher level might be beneficial. C/FBIS/B&F and C/FBIS/AS are prepared to discuss these problems with your representative.



STAT

Attachments:

- A. State letter dated 2 June 1982
- B. State Airgram A-1759
- C. Excerpts from Report of Audit of FBIS 1Nov77 - 31Aug79

DDSGT/FBIS/E&PS/B&F (23Aug82)

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